

**(Title Slide)**

**Ecclesiastes 10:1**

**Dead flies make  
the perfumer's ointment  
give off a stench;  
so a little folly outweighs  
wisdom and honor.**

*ESV*

2

**READ SLIDE**

**-- Little dead flies ruin the perfume.**

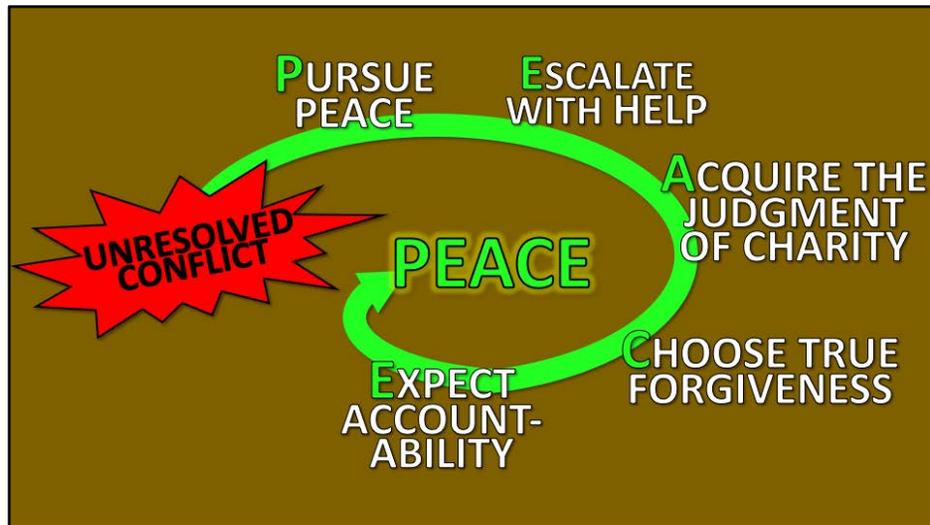
**TR: Perhaps a similar idea is captured by our feelings when our delicious soup is ruined . . .**



**. . . because there is a dead fly in it.**

- Seemingly little things can outweigh a lot of wisdom and honor.**
- Little habits that we have allowed in our lives can easily stink up everything, especially our relationships.**

**TR: Even if we have said we would make the five commitments of a biblical peacemaker . . .**



4

... we can so easily allow our little habits to mess stuff up.  
-- PEACE = READ SLIDE and review concepts

TR: We can intellectually agree with all that, yet something seems to spoil the harvest of righteousness and true Shalom.



5

**In the context of a love song in the OT, we read . . . READ SLIDE  
-- Like flies in the perfume or soup . . . so are the little foxes that  
spoil our vineyards.  
-- Little things . . . habits that we defend by saying, “That’s just  
how I am.” “That’s how I was raised.” “That’s what we did in our  
home.”**

**TR: What are some of these little foxes that are ruining our  
relationships?**



**“KNOCK-OFF” PEACE & LOVE**



**GRABBING THE ROBE ‘n HOOD**



**DEFENSIVENESS**



**If we review some of the keynote addresses in the Peace Initiative, we realize that we can easily strip the vineyard bare by .**

**.. READ SLIDE**

- Being swindled by the world’s knock-off definitions of peace and love**
- Being lured into grabbing the judge’s robe of being judgmental and even the hood of the executioner**
- Being like King Saul in his defensiveness, or perhaps not being like the anointed David who would humbly listen to Abigail as she challenged him to not seek his own vengeance.**
- The ease with which we engage these destructive tendencies,**

**betrays that we imagine they are harmless little foxes . . . ~~not~~  
a big deal.**

**TR: But there are other little foxes that we allow into our  
vineyards . . . of our marriages, families, church, and more . . .**



**“KNOCK-OFF” PEACE & LOVE**



**GRABBING THE ROBE ‘n HOOD**



**DEFENSIVENESS**

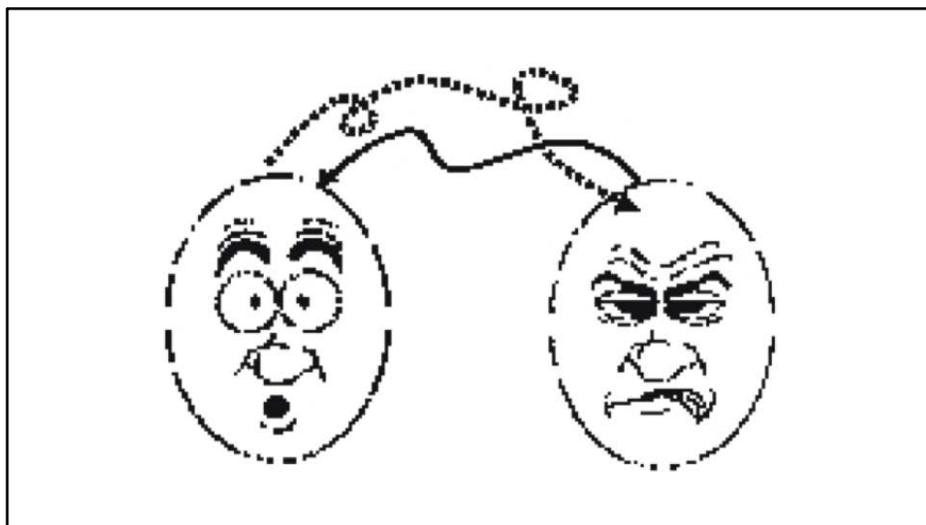


**MIND-READING**



**There’s the little habit of mind-reading.**

**TR: You know . . .**



**... when we imagine that we are so insightful that we can read others' minds, picking up on their micro-expressions, even if they say nothing ...**

**-- OR we assume others should be able to read ours.**

**TR: It is easy to leave the gate open and forget what we are told in 2 Corinthians ...**

**1 Corinthians 2:11**

9

**For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

- In the context Paul is telling us that we CAN know the mind of God because we have the Spirit of God.**
- But, a corollary is that we can't know another person's thoughts.**
- We cannot mind read.**

**TR: Another common little fox we allow into our relationships is .**  
**..**



**“KNOCK-OFF” PEACE & LOVE**



**GRABBING THE ROBE ‘n HOOD**



**DEFENSIVENESS**



**MIND-READING**

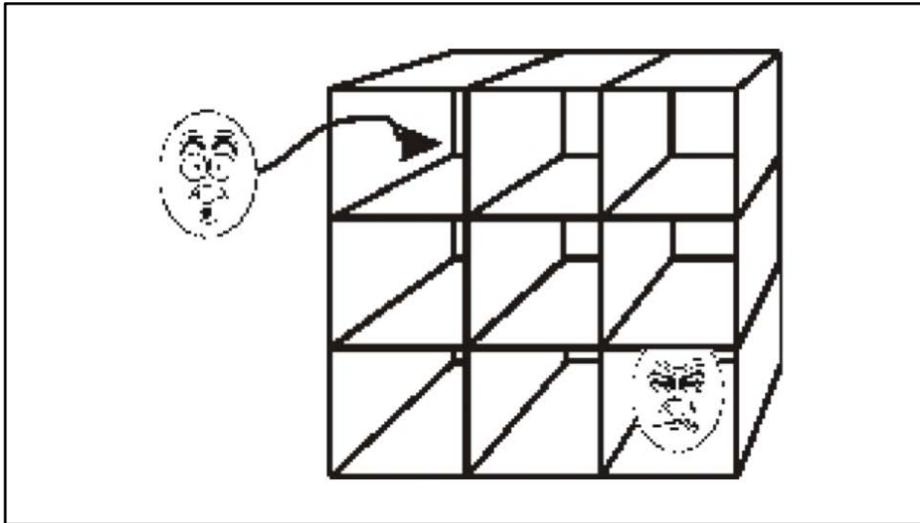


**PIGEON-HOLING**



**. . . the nasty habit of pigeon-holing.**

**TR: We all do it . . .**



**. . . we put ourselves in the position to put others and their actions and perceived attitudes into little boxes.**

**-- For example: When you are silent . . . you are mad.**

**TR: A biblical example is found in the OT, back in the book of Joshua . . .**

**Joshua 22:10**

12

**And when they came to the region of the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of imposing size.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

- The people of Israel have taken a lot of the promised land.
- Two and a half tribes took the land on the other side of the Jordan.
- Separated by the natural barrier, they build an altar that replicated what God had established on the western side of the Jordan, where the rest of the tribes were.

**TR: When the people heard it, they were ticked.**

**And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

- The concern was that there was a repeat of the apostasy that happened at Peor, that led to a judging plague from God.
- The pigeon-holing was that: building an altar = doing worship our own way.
- The good news, before there was bloodshed, the eastern tribes were care-fronted.
- They explained that this was only an altar of witness . . . not for sacrifices but a reminder that they were one with the western tribes.

**NEXT SLIDE SAME AS THIS ONE**

**And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them.**

*ESV*

**-- This is very different that Jeroboam Son of Nebat making golden calves so that the northern tribes wouldn't go back to Jerusalem to worship.**

**-- Don't many of us easily allow pigeon-holing to happen and then follow it up with defensiveness and then a grab of our robe and hood?**

**TR: In talking about little foxes, nasty little habits that we imagine are not a big deal, we can't overlook the habits of . . .**



**“KNOCK-OFF” PEACE & LOVE**



**GRABBING THE ROBE ‘n HOOD**



**DEFENSIVENESS**



**MIND-READING**



**PIGEON-HOLING**



**GOSSIP & HEARSAY**

## **READ SLIDE**

**TR: Gossip, even under the guise of caring about other people, is wrong. A few years ago we worked through the Scriptural teaching and came up with these three warning lights . . .**



**TALKING BEHIND  
SOMEONE'S BACK?**



**SAYING BAD THINGS?**



**TOWARD NO  
GOOD ACTION?**

**We gossip when . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- When all three warning lights go off, we must snare the little fox.**

**-- When one or two go off, we need to become aware of the fox scouting around the edge of our vineyard, looking for a way to get in.**

**TR: Related to gossip is hearsay. We “hear something said” and then we imagine we can act on it.**

**1 Timothy 5:19**

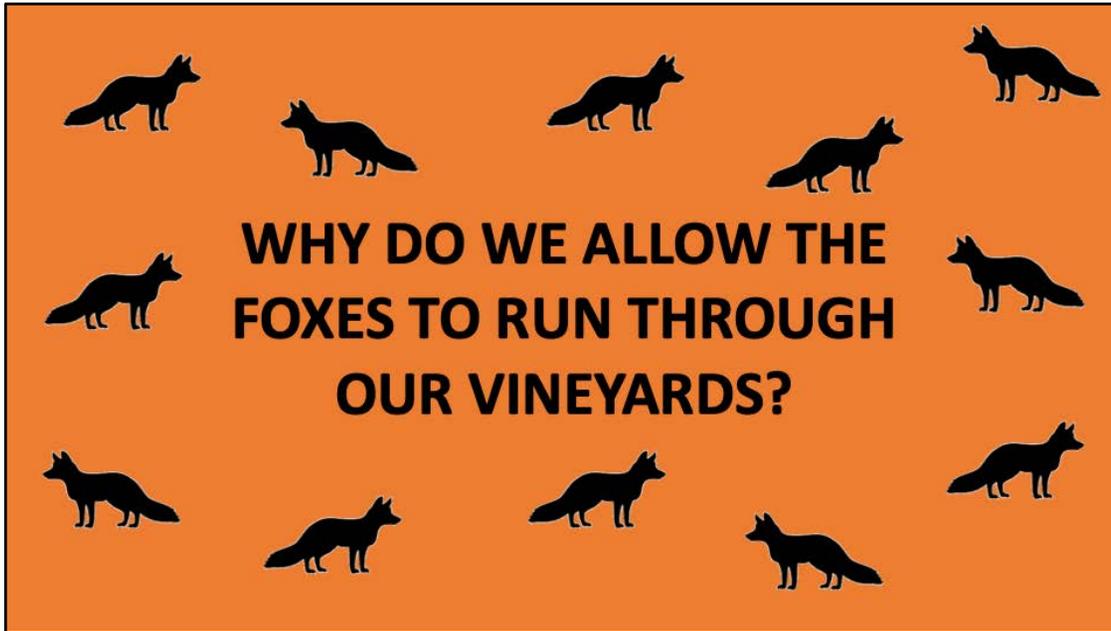
17

**Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

- Someone makes a charge against an elder and expects that is enough to admit the charge.
  - It is a little fox that destroys churches and extended families.
  - My hope today is not to explore these bad habits, but to ponder with you how we can actually change them.
- TR: Related to that is the question, "Why?"



**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Or to use the other image we looked at earlier . . .**



## **READ SLIDE**

**TR: As I've thought and prayed about this, it seems to me that all these nasty bad habits, these flies and foxes, are footed in what could make a good book title . . .**



## **READ SLIDE**

- Our vineyards are stripped and our stomachs growl with hunger because we couldn't eat our soup.**
- Why is true biblical peace, Shalom, such a rare thing?**
- Not the peace of the absence of conflict but the presence of wholeness, harmony?**
- You will have to think this through yourself . . . don't all the bad habits we briefly reviewed, find their origin in our pride, our self-centeredness, our obstinance in thinking we know what's going on in someone else's mind even when they tell us differently?**
- And prejudice . . . we all are prejudice . . . that is we pre-judge**

**others, we are presumptuous.**

**20**

**TR: How in the world can we change our pride and prejudice?**

**IF WE DON'T WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE JUST NEED TO AVOID . . .**



21

**Some of us will admit that we are not motivated to make the change.**

**-- The elephant of our feelings has determined "My reality" and I've declared that "My truth."**

**TR: If we don't want to change, if dead flies and vine-stripping foxes are OK with us, then all we need to do is avoid . . .**

**IF WE DON'T WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE JUST NEED TO AVOID . . .**



**PEOPLE**



22

**. . . is people.**

**-- We can't avoid [CONFLICT] – “disagreement about something that matters to us”**

**-- . . . so, we can just avoid people.**

**TR: We should also be sure to avoid . . .**

**IF WE DON'T WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE JUST NEED TO AVOID . . .**



**PEOPLE**



**THE WORD**



23

**. . . spending time in the Word of God.**

**-- The Word will lay us bare . . . it will expose the thoughts and intentions of our hearts, as Hebrews tells us.**

**-- The Word will show us our pride and our prejudice.**

**-- EX: African-American friend who told me I was prejudiced.**

**TR: While we are avoiding things so that we can keep stinking up our perfume and stripping our relational vineyards . . .**

**IF WE DON'T WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE JUST NEED TO AVOID . . .**



**PEOPLE**



**THE WORD**



**LIFE-ON-LIFE ACCOUNTABILITY**



24

**. . . we should be sure to avoid . . . READ SLIDE**

- Even if we are in a small group, make sure that the discussion are all “out there” and not a manifestation of true vulnerability.**
- When we have real life-on-life relationships, we can have the help of others when they give us an “Abigail moment” like we looked at last week.**
- Let’s be honest . . . many of us would rather be lonely than change.**

**TR: Why would we want . . .**

**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13**

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and **are over you in the Lord and admonish you,**<sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

*ESV*

25

**. . . to have someone over us in the Lord and admonishing us?**

**TR: Why would we allow ourselves and even push ourselves into such accountability that we . . .**

**Hebrews 13:17**

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they **are keeping watch over your souls**, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

*ESV*

26

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Why would we want to have life-of-life accountability that would give us brothers and sisters who could help us settle a dispute. Most of us would rather live in the shame of unresolved conflict . . . surrounded by dead flies and little foxes . . .**

**1 Corinthians 6:5-6**

**I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, <sup>6</sup>but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?**

*ESV*

27

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: If we don't want to change, we just need to be people who  
AVOID . . .**

**IF WE DON'T WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE JUST NEED TO AVOID . . .**



**PEOPLE**



**THE WORD**



**LIFE-ON-LIFE ACCOUNTABILITY**



**THE SPIRIT**

28

**READ SLIDE . . . ultimately the Holy Spirit.**

**TR: Let us not forget the context for one of our memory verses . . .**

**Ephesians 4:30-32**

**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

*ESV*

29

**READ SLIDE**

- We may be memorizing verses 31 and 32, but the context is verse 30.
- When our relationships are marked with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, any malice . . . we have allowed the foxes in, we have not kept the dead flies out.
- . . . we have grieved the Holy Spirit, Who has sealed us as believers.

**TR: So, if we don't want to change . . . if we like flies in our soup and vineyards with no grapes . . . avoid these things . . . but**

**realize . . .**

**29**



**. . . READ SLIDE**

-- Perhaps that is why so many of us are lonely . . . and, even as professing believers, ineffective at pointing people to Jesus.  
-- Health insurer Cigna took a nationwide survey of 20,000 adults and found that 54% of respondents said they feel like no one actually knows them well, NPR reports. Additionally, 56% of people said the people they surround themselves around “are not necessarily with them,” and approximately 40% said they “lack companionship,” their “relationships aren’t meaningful,” and that they feel “isolated from others.”

(<http://fortune.com/2018/05/01/americans-lonely-cigna-study/>)

**(NEXT SLIDE SAME AS THIS ONE )**

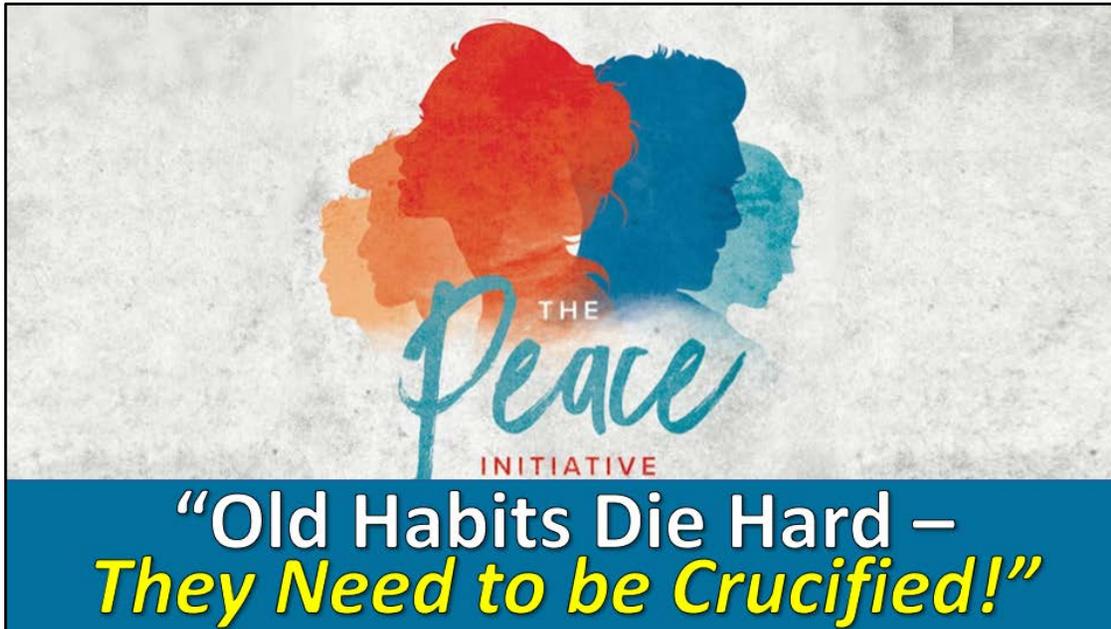
**30**



**(SAME SLIDE AS PREVIOUS)**

- CF. Mechanic whose car is broken down . . . clergy with sex scandals and churches that protect them should have millstones tied around their necks.
- Our kids are looking at us . . . do we allow the little nasty habits kill our relationships?

**TR: If you are like me, the horror of people avoiding my Savior, because of me, stirs me to want to change . . . to really change . . . but what will it take. These dirty little relationship sabotaging habits die hard and the pride and prejudice that breeds them?**



**They need to be crucified not coddled.**

**TR: If you and I really want to change, we need . . .**

**IF WE WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE NEED A CRUCIFIXION . . .**



**CHANGE**

33

**. . . READ SLIDE**

**--This starts by asking Jesus Christ to be your Savior, turning away from our sin and to Him in faith.**

**TR: This is why many passages, that are challenging us to get rid of the nasty habits and put on the habits of Shalom, use the past tense.**

**Galatians 5:22-24**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ Jesus **have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**

*ESV*

34

-- READ SLIDE

TR: Another passage . . .

**Romans 6:5-6**

For if we have been united with (Christ) in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup>We know that **our old self was crucified with him** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

*ESV*

35

**READ SLIDE**

- When we publicly declare our faith through baptism, we portray that we have died with Christ . . .
- we have been crucified with Him.

**TR: As this passage in Romans 6 continues . . .**

**Romans 6:7-10**

For one who has died has been set free from sin. <sup>8</sup>Now if **we have died with Christ**, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup>For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

*ESV*

36

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: In light of the fact that we were crucified with Him, that we have died with Christ . . .**

**Romans 6:11**

37

So you also must **consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

*ESV*

**. . . we must now . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- We have died . . . we must now reckon ourselves dead. Stop doing CPR on the old nature, the old self.**

**TR: A critical part of actually moving toward true relational peace is to remember and consider . . .**

**Galatians 2:20**

**I have been crucified with Christ.** It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

*ESV*

38

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: This death we died by faith in Christ, our union with Jesus in His death and resurrection, means . . .**

**Galatians 6:14**

39

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: We have been crucified, but we must consider ourselves dead, and we must . . .**

**Colossians 3:5-7**

**Put to death** therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>On account of these the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup>In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.

*ESV*

40

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Verse 8 continues . . .**

**Colossians 3:8-10**

But now you must **put them all away:** anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, **seeing that you have put off the old self** with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

*ESV*

41

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: If my assessment is close to right, in order for us to change, to truly do the P.E.A.C.E. path to Shalom-peace, we need to have trusted Jesus and been united with Him in faith, thus dying to . . .**



**... READ SLIDE**

- What keeps us from asking for help when we've confronted our believing spouse and they won't change?**
- Isn't it pride?**
- What keeps us practicing the habits of mind-reading and pigeon-holing, even believing all that we hear-said?**
- Isn't it prejudice?**

**TR: How do we put down these two breeding grounds of our nasty little fly and fox habits?**

**IF WE WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE NEED A CRUCIFIXION . . .**



**A DECISION**



43

**We need to recognize that, as followers of Jesus, we have died to them.**

**-- Today, if you want a new marriage to the same spouse; new relationships with friends that will want to carry your casket . . . then . . .**

**-- We must reckon ourselves dead.**

**-- We must actively put them to death, as we put them off.**

**-- But, as we do, I need to share three stages that you may go through. These are not from the Scriptures but from my experience.**

-- Crucifying our bad habits begins with a decision . . . one <sup>43</sup>  
that perhaps we will make today.

TR: A decision to do more than just memorize . . .

**Ephesians 4:31-32**

**Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

*ESV*

44

**. . . READ SLIDE**

**TR: While this is right and good, be prepared for a next phase in the extermination process.**

**IF WE WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE NEED A CRUCIFIXION . . .**



**A DECISION**



**A DESPERATION**



45

**A phase marked by . . . READ SLIDE**

- We decide that it would be wise and good to get rid of gossip, no longer talking bad about someone behind their back without the purpose of trying to approach them to deal with the bad.**
- We decide to not slander, or listen to the hearsay of malice.**
- We decide to be tender-hearted and forgiving.**

**TR: But then we have an . . .**



### **READ SLIDE**

- This is a moment when the Holy Spirit pulls back the curtains on our hearts and says . . . it is not dead yet.
- In one sense it is dead . . . we have died with Christ.
- In another sense, it is still kicking and breathing . . . we must reckon it dead and put it to death.
- EX: Ah-ha moment of anger toward Kathy as young marrieds; Ah-ha of pride when I make sure others know my accomplishments

**NEXT SLIDE SAME AS THIS ONE**



**(SAME SLIDE AS PREVIOUS)**

- The horrible ah-ha when we realize the root goes deeper still.
- EX: Ah-ha when we realize we have, in our pride and prejudice, imaged we are fit to be judge and jury.
- When the curtain is pulled back and we recoil from what we see, we move to the stage of desperation . . . desperate for the Spirit to change us.

**TR: Even after this desperation stage, we likely will have the curtains pulled back again and then we may reach the . . .**

**IF WE WANT TO CHANGE,  
WE NEED A CRUCIFIXION . . .**



**A DECISION**



**A DESPERATION**



**A DEPENDENCY**

48

**. . . the depth of dependency upon the Spirit.**

**-- We realize that we need more than a resolution, or even deep motivation, we need God at work in us through the Spirit.**

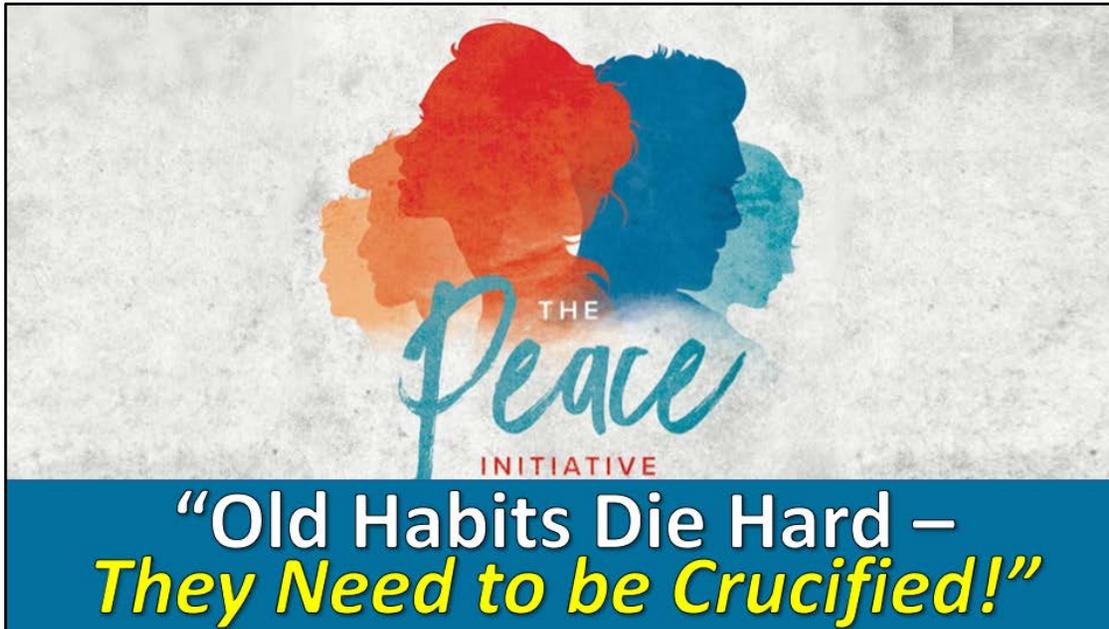
**-- We realize that we must be filled with the Spirit, not quenching or grieving Him.**

**-- We may not want to go through these painful drawbacks of our curtains . . . so we avoid people, the Word, life-on-life, even avoiding the Spirit . . .**

**-- . . . but then our vineyards are overrun by the nasty little foxes and the pesky, filthy flies.**

**TR: These destructive habits die hard . . .**

**48**



**... they need to be crucified.**

**-- Won't you join me today is asking the Spirit help us, in a dependence upon Him, to reckon as crucified and put to death what is not of Him in us?**

**-- If you've had an Ah-ha moment recently, don't turn away from God, but turn to Him.**